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Retail Hell #6:
Go Home
Already

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The further adventures of a service worker trying to stay sane

By Kat Avila | Web Published 2.1.2006



Monkey children. I already asked twice if the parents could keep their children off the employee ladders. This is for the safety of the children, and so the parents won't turn around and sue the store when the kids fall on their vulnerable watermelon heads.



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This family was even more unhappy when I tried to shoo them out of the store. Minutes earlier I had asked for one of the registers to be kept open. Most people at that point are apologetic and hurry over to the front of the store. This clan wasn't budging. "We're going to BUY stuff!" angrily retorted the she-bear.

I wasn't so sure -- buy stuff or lift stuff. They had had plenty of time to buy stuff at the half-hour-till-closing announcement, fifteen-minute announcement, we're-closed announcement, we've-been-closed-for-five-minutes-and-we're-ready-to-unleash-the-guard-dogs announcement. And those kids should have been in bed two hours ago.

"Are YOU the MANAGER?" huffed and puffed the mother. She was breathing fire while her hubby cowered in the background.

"No, I'm not." Here we go again, I thought, trying hard not to roll my eyes. What a bad way to end my shift.

"Then WHO are YOU to be telling us to LEAVE?"

"The store has been closed for ten minutes."

"I want to talk to the MANAGER."

"He's waiting for you at the door."

"I'm NEVER coming back HERE to shop!"

Good. We don't EVER want to see your face again either. Just like the dweeb who was upset because I threw away the greasy bag of whatever he had left unattended on a shelf of paper goods; why do you think stores have signs that say "No Food or Drinks"? Or the mafioso who couldn't talk on his cell phone and make his way to the door at the same time. Or the senile geezer who thinks closing is a good time for him to unpark himself at the cafe for a leisurely stroll through the store.

But none are as bad as the supervisor who must be related to the passive aggressive driver doing 55 MPH in the fast lane of the freeway. Everybody has already clocked out. This jefe sits back at his desk like he's on his lunch break. He knows no one can walk out the door until he sets the store alarm.

Not long ago I had to sit through an after-hours "Love This Company or Leave It" meeting for employees. Barbie lead the show. "If you have a complaint, you can bring it to me." Barbie was straining to keep the smile on her face. She generally puts on her perky girl mask for the customers and the young guys she's flirting with, then switches to PMS bitch mode for the rest of us. Sigh. Another tiresome night.

(NOTE: If anyone from work or a customer is reading this, none of these people are you. Really. They're composites created for entertainment, mostly mine.)

Kat's "Retail Hell" series should be scaring some humanities majors into becoming doctors, lawyers, and engineers.

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